



Volume 15 Issue 25  
February 21, 2012

*"Semper Excelsius-  
The Liberty Way"*

The Liberty Common School  
*Common Knowledge, Common Virtues, Common Sense*  
A National Charter School of the Year, A Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon  
School, A Certified Core Knowledge Visitation Site School,  
A John Irwin School of Excellence

[Click Here](#) to view Liberty  
Common High School  
Newsletter

## What's Happening at LCS K-6th

Feb. 21- Track and Field  
Meeting 7-8pm in the LCS gym

Feb. 21- Jr. High Girls  
Basketball Plays at HMS-4:00  
p.m.

Feb. 21-Subway Sandwich Order  
for Winter Carnival Due

Feb. 24-Liberty T-shirt Day

Feb. 24- Winter Carnival-  
6-8 p.m. *Volunteers Needed*

Feb. 27- Scrip Order Due

Feb. 28-First Day of Track  
Practice

Feb. 29-TCAP Begins \*\*\**See  
schedule on page 6.*\*\*\*

March 2- Group Pictures

March 9th- 3rd Quarter Free  
Dress Day / Teacher Minute to  
Win It-2:30-3:00 p.m.

## Liberty Common School Board of Directors 2011-2012

**Crissy Kopren** 266-1005  
**Amy Redstone** 378-1170  
**Dan Provaznik** 223-0188  
**Mark Sutherlin** 225-0432  
**Cassy Turner** 691-3027  
**Jeff Webb** 545-9636  
**Bill Werst** 631-8379

**Board of Directors Meeting:**  
Liberty Common School  
March 22, 2010  
1725 Sharp Point Dr.  
Faculty Room  
7:00 p.m.

## Headmaster Writing by Russ Spicer

### Choice and Competition

A few years ago, Jay Greene, the author of the book *"Education Myths – What Special Interest Groups want you to Believe about Our Schools – And Why It Isn't So"*, was a guest on ABC's 20/20 with John Stossel. The title of this segment was "Stupid in America." The program addressed our education system and some of its shortcomings. After the show, Jay Greene responded to questions from viewers who watched Stossel's report. Below you will find some of the questions and answers that were posted by ABC news after the broadcast.

**Larry McGlasson:**

*An often heard argument is that "charter" or private schools just take the best students, so that leaves public schools with the more difficult students — behaviorally and academically. Is that an accurate argument? If not, what are the real facts?*

**Jay P. Greene:**

*The evidence suggests that academic achievement of students in public schools actually improves when those schools are faced with greater choice and competition from private or charter schools. Clive Belfield and Henry Levin at Columbia University's Teachers College conducted a systematic examination of the evidence and after reviewing more than 200 analyses they conclude that "a sizable majority of these studies report beneficial effects of competition across all outcomes, with many reporting statistically significant correlations. ... The above evidence shows reasonably consistent evidence of a link between competition (choice) and education quality. Increased competition and higher educational quality are positively correlated." Rather than draining public schools of talent and resources, hindering their ability to improve, it appears that choice and competition improve the quality of public schools by providing them with stronger motivation to attend to the needs of their students in order to retain and attract those students and the revenues they generate.*

**Tom Moore in Bridgewater, Mass.:**

*Do well-paid teachers perform better than poorly paid teachers, and if so, is it worth giving the money to the teachers and not to other expenditures like texts and computers, etc.?  
The show "Stupid in America" says that U.S. students are on par with the international community during the elementary years. What happens after that?*

**Greene:**

*Unfortunately, teacher pay in most places is not based on the extent to which teachers contribute to improvements in student achievement. Instead of having pay for performance, we have pay for persistence, where we pay teachers more simply for being employed longer. After the first year or two of teaching there does not seem to be any significant contribution to student learning from having more experienced teachers. So, under our current system better paid teachers are not necessarily any better than lower paid teachers. If we were to adopt merit pay systems that all could change.*

**Pat in Palm Harbor, Fla.:**

*So WHAT is the answer? What can we do? This is appalling!*

**Greene:**

*Improving a large and complicated organization, like our school system, is never an easy or quick task. There is, however, strong evidence to suggest that we need to focus on providing schools with stronger incentives to use their resources effectively and improve the quality of education. In the incentive of schools and educators to offer a quality education (Continued on Page 6)*

## Churchill's Chat

### D TCAP S D CSAP

Have any of you ever read the book "CDB?" It is a children's book written by William Steig published in 1968. If not, you should check it out. The book is written in code where each letter in the caption stands for a word the letters name sounds like. For instance, CDB is See the Bee. I always think of this book when I hear new abbreviations, and let me tell you, there are a lot in the education field. Well here is a new one for you.

The TCAP is the CSAP.

TCAP stands for Transitional Colorado Assessment Program. This will be the first year that we administer the TCAP test to grades 3-6. We are anxious to see how our students do on this new statewide test. As you can see, we have been posting the schedule for this test in the Monday Notes. Please make sure to plan around these testing dates as we take this test very seriously. We encourage all students to stay healthy by eating well, getting plenty of rest, and washing hands. Attending school during these days is of utmost importance.

Liberty Common School has consistently received top test scores for years. I attribute this to the Core Knowledge Curriculum in which we teach. As a Core Knowledge consultant, I continually reiterate with new Core Knowledge schools the importance of sticking to the Core Knowledge curriculum and to avoid deviating to teach students to the test. If a student has more content knowledge, then they will be more generally competent when taking the state wide test. It is as simple as that.

At Liberty, we do not set aside instruction to prepare our students for the TCAP. At the beginning of each year, our teachers conduct a CSAP analysis to see in what areas we need to improve. They then make modifications to the existing Core Knowledge Curriculum to meet these skills or objectives. For example, if our students do poorly in drawing inferences, then the teachers will plan to teach students about inferences within the context of the Core Knowledge literature taught. As we get closer to the testing dates, one would also see our staff begin discussions about best test taking practices and what our kids need to do be successful in regards to following test directions and understanding the test writing prompts.

We have found this type of test preparation to be very successful. Adjustments on how we teach not what we teach is the ticket to successful state wide testing. Liberty's high expectations, parent involvement, and highly qualified staff all contribute as well. Liberty continues to score as one of the top 3 schools in the district. N-Q 4 MAKING LBRT S # 1.

## Penny War Results

The collection of spare change by students at Liberty Common School was amazing. Coins are still being counted at the time of publication and results will be posted in next week's Monday Notes. Thanks to all who participated.

## How to Reach Us

- Our office hours are **7:30-4:00 p.m.**
- Our telephone number is **(970) 482-9800**
- Our attendance line is **(970) 482-9800, option 2**, please call by 8:30 a.m.
- Please note that you may go to your student's classroom and wait for them to be dismissed only after 2:50 p.m.
- If you need to take your child to an appointment during school hours, please come to the Front Office, sign them out and we will call them out of class.
- All students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. must be signed in at the Front Office. It is important that a reason be written as this determines if the tardy is excused or not.
- Our school closes at 4:00 p.m. All students need to have left the building by 4:00 p.m. or be chaperoned by a parent or guardian.

## And the Survey Says.....

It is that time of year when we seek your input on your child's educational experience at Liberty. We value your opinion and strive to do our very best to be one of the top schools in Colorado. Thank you to all who have completed the general survey. Last week you received an individual teacher/class survey. One survey will be sent for each child attending school. Please take a few minutes to fill out these surveys. **We value your feedback.**

## Important Dates 2012-2013 School Year

The 2012-2013 Calendar has been approved by Liberty Common's Board of Directors. Please note the following dates when making vacation plans for your family.

**Classes Begin** - August 15, 2012  
**Labor Day** - September 3, 2012  
**Thanksgiving Break** - November 21-23, 2012  
**Christmas Break** - December 24-January 4, 2013  
**Spring Break** - March 18-22, 2013  
**Last Day of School**- May 24, 2013

## LIBERTY'S AMAZING AND FREE WINTER CARNIVAL

This Friday, February 24th is the FREE Winter Carnival! Come prepared to see cool science demonstrations from Matt Hannatin, The Science Guy from Science Toy Magic in Old Town, Fort Collins. He will astound your mind! See how high you can jump in the rocket bouncy house! Test your skills by doing awesome crafts and tricky games. Enjoy your favorite pizza or sub sandwich for dinner, (for a small price). Best of all, come have a BLAST with your friends!

Parents, we still need **20 volunteers** to make our awesome stations run smoothly. Please contact Marnie Dame if you are able to donate time to help make this a great carnival for our students. [MarneDame@MSN.com](mailto:MarneDame@MSN.com), 391-8983.

## Do You Need Before School Care?

Liberty Common School has an opportunity to offer before school care from 7:00-8:00 a.m. Monday-Friday provided by our current after school care provider, the A.S.K. program. The cost would be \$7.00 full time student and \$8.00 part time student. If this is something you are interested in please contact Jill Ronen, at 482-9800, ext. 3110.

## Scholastic Spring Book Fair Needs Volunteers

Join in the reading celebration as Liberty hosts the Scholastic Spring Book Fair Luau on **March 6th-9th in the Liberty Common Library**, open **8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

If you're all booked up during Book Fair week (or just want to keep shopping), be sure to visit the Book Fair online at <http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/homepage/libertycommonschl> (click on link to access) The Book Fair online is available for an extended time from Feb. 22, 2012 to March 13, 2012. At this website you will find an expanded selection of books for the whole family—preschool to adults and can share our Book Fair with family and friends by sending wish lists or eCards. All orders ship to school for FREE and each purchase benefits our school.

## Liberty Common School Yearbook Still Available to Purchase

The 2011-2012 Liberty Common Yearbook is still available for purchase. The price is now \$18.00 per book and orders will be taken through the end of February or until supplies last. Order forms are available in the Front Office. Yearbooks will be distributed the on the last day of school, May 25th.

## Annual Spring Gala-April 13, 2012



### Annual Spring Gala Update

Friday, April 13th

Line up your babysitters now!

Consider coordinating a sleepover with another Liberty family and share a sitter.

Early Registration Drawing

Register to attend the Gala by March 9<sup>th</sup> and you will be entered to win a prize.

Volunteers Still Needed:

Poster Making

Volunteer Coordination

Phone Calls to Businesses

Don't Forget the Date:

Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>

6 - 11 pm

Embassy Suites, Loveland

If you would like to help out in any way or have any questions, please contact

Wendy Thomas at [prontobw@msn.com](mailto:prontobw@msn.com) or 227-7197.

## Our Own Wins at PSD Girls Chess Tournament

Congratulations to Megan Liu (3rd grade) who won 2nd place in the 3rd to 5th grade category today at this year's Poudre School District Girl's Chess Tournament. Megan was the only one from Liberty Common School at this tournament. Way to go Megan!

## Kindergarten Store Opening: Need for Gently Used Toys and Books

Do you have any gently used toys or books at the bottom of your toy box that the kids have tired of playing with? The kindergarten teachers would love to have those neglected toys or books of all sizes. We will be opening our stores in a couple of weeks to help teach our kinders about money. Please drop off toys to any of the kindergarten classrooms. Thank you very much for helping make this money unit so fun for the kinders!



## Freedom To Teach, Liberty To Learn

By: **Bob Schaffer, LCS Principal**

Last Thursday, I traveled to Washington D.C., to testify before Congress. The House Committee on Education and the Workforce invited me to comment on new legislation introduced to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The opportunity gave me a chance to talk a bit about Liberty and the many benefits of school choice, charter schools and parental involvement. Here are some excerpts from my testimony:

“I have become deeply convinced of the value of parental involvement in education, of the marketplace-driven benefits of school choice, of the value of local control in education and streamlined systems to get more dollars to classrooms where they’re needed most.

“These beliefs are among the chief reasons I am here today. These broad strategies enjoy general bipartisan consensus among the seven Members of the Colorado State Board of Education. As chairman, I can assure you that Colorado’s board also shares an ambitious vision for the future of Colorado’s education system.

“We’ve led the country in transforming our teaching corps. First, let me say that Coloradans agree it is the fundamental right and obligation of parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children. Parents play the most important role in determining the academic success of a student. After that, it is curriculum that influences the success of a student.

“In exercising their rights and fulfilling their great responsibilities, parents most often look to and rely upon proficient teachers to assist in shaping the academic success of their children. Colorado is leading the way in legitimately leaving behind the concept of teacher tenure. My colleagues and I recently passed – unanimously on a bipartisan basis – a new system to evaluate public-school teachers on the basis of performance.

“In Colorado, as in every state, parents deserve to be treated like real customers, teachers deserve to be treated like real professionals, and children – all children – deserve to be treated like real Americans. Schools should enjoy the freedom to teach, and students should be given the liberty to learn.

“Again, I appreciate the opportunity to share with you a perspective from the Rocky Mountain West. It’s a perspective that favors choice, local control, a professional transformation of the teaching craft, transparency, accountability, competitiveness and marketplace entrepreneurship. It’s a perspective that, to me, seems more possible and likely with the introduction of the two bills you’re considering today.”

If you’d like to see the rest of the transcript [CLICK HERE](#).

## Grandparents Corner

By: **Ed Haynes, Chairman of the Liberty Grandparents Club**

Last week, we held our first-ever, quarterly “Liberty For Lunch” gathering. About 36 grandparents attended, plus school administrators, student leaders and a few other parents! LCHS Principal **Bob Schaffer** did a fine job as our keynote speaker. Throughout his presentation on federal, state and local education policy, he pressed a common theme, “It is the right and obligation of parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children. A vibrant academic marketplace gives parents the greatest chance to choose a school that best meets the educational needs of their children.”

**Wendy Thomas**, Chair of the Liberty Common School Annual Spring Gala, shared details about the upcoming event which is scheduled for April 13<sup>th</sup>. **Tamara Rhodes** provided order forms, t-shirts, hats, sweatshirts etc., specifically for the Liberty Common Grandparents Club. We also learned more about how easy it is to participate in Liberty’s Script Program which benefits the school without anyone spending an extra dime.

Headmaster **Russ Spicer** gave a brief update, as did LCHS student leaders **Megan Davis** and **Gabrielle Bear**. The event turned out as planned – a great opportunity to socialize, enjoy a good lunch and become more familiar with the fantastic things going on at Liberty. Please watch this space for information about our next “Liberty For Lunch.”

## Clothes Closet Needs Donations

Thanks to all who have already donated to the clothes closet. We are needing pants in sizes 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, and 14. We also need socks. Please make sure all clothing meets dress code and is without stains or holes.

## Ridgeview Clothes Closet Sale

Are your children starting to grow out of their school clothes? Are knees torn, or shirts too short to tuck in? Well, come and shop the Ridgeview Clothing Closet for the “new to you” dress code items. We have pants, polos, jumpers, and more all at reasonable prices.

The Clothing Closet Sale will be held at Ridgeview, 1800 S. Lemay Fort Collins, Saturday, February 25, from 9 a.m.– 1 p.m. , in the gym. Contact Ann Schmidberger at [aschmidberger@ridgeviewclassical.com](mailto:aschmidberger@ridgeviewclassical.com). with any questions.

## Spring Sports Begin Soon

The Jr. High girls' soccer and boys' and girl's track & field seasons are right around the corner! Grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> at Liberty are encouraged to participate, no matter the playing experience.

There will be three track & field practices dates before spring break. These dates are February 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and March 7<sup>th</sup>. The season runs from 2/28- 4/24. Please make sure you have all paperwork completed and turned in *prior* to the first week of practice. It can be found by [clicking here](#). **There will be a parent meeting for track & field on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 7-8pm in the LCS gymnasium.** Any parents with background knowledge in distance, throws or jumps, please contact the track coaches. Volunteers interested will need to have a background check completed before working with the team. Please contact Bev Hanawalt for more information on the background checks. [bhanawalt@libertycommon.org](mailto:bhanawalt@libertycommon.org)

The first practice for girls' soccer will be **March 19<sup>th</sup>**. The season **runs 3/19-5/9**. Please make sure you have all paperwork completed *prior* to the first week of practice. It can be found by [clicking here](#). Once all paperwork has been turned in, you will be given a "blue card" to turn in on the first day of the season/tryouts. You must have a "blue card" in order to tryout/practice. Blue cards will be given out by Mr. Torgeson at the LCHS campus.

If you have any questions, please contact...

Chuck Hubbeling – Jr. High Girls Soccer Coach – [chubbeling@libertycommon.org](mailto:chubbeling@libertycommon.org)  
 Donny Reeves – Jr. High Track & Field Coach – [dreeves@libertycommon.org](mailto:dreeves@libertycommon.org)  
 Jon Wilcox – Jr. High Track & Field Coach – [jwilcox@libertycommon.org](mailto:jwilcox@libertycommon.org)

## CVC Meeting– March 19th at 2:00 p.m.

Attention Classroom Volunteer Coordinators: Please mark your calendars to attend a CVC meeting March 19, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in the Teacher's Lounge. The topic of the meeting will be planning for Teacher Appreciation. Please R.S.V.P. Kendra Simms at (970)691-2033 or at [ronsimm872@msn.com](mailto:ronsimm872@msn.com). Hope to see you on March 19th.!



Liberty T-Shirt Day

February 24, 2012

Show Your Liberty  
Pride  
Wear Your Favorite  
Liberty T-shirt

## Talent Search for Talent Show

### Liberty's Got Talent!

What's yours??



**Audition Dates: March 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> 3:00-5:00pm**

**Talent Show: March 30<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm**

#### Audition Requirements:

- Acts must be no longer than 3 minutes in length
- All material must be school appropriate.
- All singers must bring either an accompaniment CD or have a piano accompanist.
- Students are expected to come to the audition rehearsed and prepared (with necessary equipment)

#### What are judges looking for?

- Unique talents
- A variety of different acts
- Professionalism
- Coming prepared and rehearsed (your act should be **ready to perform** as if it were the show)
- Humor (if appropriate to the act)

#### Will all students make it into the Talent Show?

- Depending on how many students audition for the Talent Show, judges may need to make cuts to keep the show a reasonable length.

#### Examples/Suggestions for Acts (You are **not** limited to these!):

- Stand up comedy or impersonation
- Magic tricks
- Special skill such as hula hooping, yo-yo, juggling, rubix cube, gymnastics, etc.
- Short drama, skit or puppet show
- Performance on a musical instrument or voice
- Choreographed dance number

## Headmaster Writing Continued from Front Page

*by expanding choice and competition, which will pressure them to figure out ways to improve or risk losing students and the revenue they generate. We can also strengthen accountability systems to reward schools and educators for excellent work that improves the quality of education while sanctioning them for inferior work. We've just started pursuing these reform strategies seriously but can do much more along these lines.*

At Liberty Common School, we embrace the notion of school choice and competition. We believe this competition has contributed to making both our school and the district schools better. The teachers of Liberty Common School operate under a “pay for performance” system and work very hard to provide our students with an excellent education. As a charter school, we realize the importance of providing a quality school. If not, we know that we will not last long as the students and parents will not choose to attend our school. Isn't that how it should be? A school should have work hard and be held accountable to ensure it is providing the best education possible for its students. Thankfully, Liberty Common School does.

### LIBERTY COMMON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TCAP SCHEDULE 2011-2012

GRADE	DATE	SESSION	TIME			
3rd	2/29/2012	Reading #1	8:00-10:00			
3rd	3/1/2012	Reading #2	8:00-10:00			
3rd	3/20/2012	Math #1	8:00-10:00			
3rd	3/21/2012	Math #2	8:00-10:00			
3rd	3/26/2012	Writing #1	8:00-10:00			
3rd	3/27/2012	Writing #2	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/20/2012	Math #1	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/21/2012	Math #2	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/22/2012	Math #3	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/26/2012	Writing #1	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/27/2012	Writing #2	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/28/2012	Reading #3	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/29/2012	Reading #4	8:00-10:00			
4th	3/30/2012	Writing #5	8:00-10:00			
4th	4/2/2012	Reading/Writing #6	8:00-10:00			
5th	3/20/2012	Math #1	10:00-12:00			
5th	3/21/2012	Math #2	10:00-12:00			
5th	3/22/2012	Math #3	10:00-12:00			
5th	3/26/2012	Writing #1	10:00-12:00			
5th	3/27/2012	Writing #2	10:00-12:00			
5th	3/28/2012	Reading #3	10:00-12:00			
5th	3/29/2012	Reading #4	10:00-12:00			
5th	3/30/2012	Writing #5	10:00-12:00			
5th	4/2/2012	Reading/Writing #6	10:00-12:00			
5th	4/3/2012	Science #1	10:00-12:00			
5th	4/4/2012	Science #2	10:00-12:00			
5th	4/5/2012	Science #3	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/20/2012	Math #1	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/21/2012	Math #2	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/22/2012	Math #3	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/26/2012	Writing #1	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/27/2012	Writing #2	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/28/2012	Reading #3	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/29/2012	Reading #4	10:00-12:00			
6th	3/30/2012	Writing #5	10:00-12:00			
6th	4/2/2012	Reading/Writing #6	10:00-12:00			

#### KEY

2/29/2012	3rd Grade Only
3/1/2012	3rd Grade Only
3/20/2012	3rd/4th/5th/6th
3/21/2012	3rd/4th/5th/6th
3/22/2012	4th/5th/6th
3/26/2012	3rd/4th/5th/6th
3/27/2012	3rd/4th/5th/6th
3/28/2012	4th/5th/6th
3/29/2012	4th/5th/6th
3/30/2012	4th/5th/6th
4/2/2012	4th/5th/6th
4/3/2012	5th Grade Only
4/4/2012	5th Grade Only
4/5/2012	5th Grade Only

#### NOTES:

Grades 3-4 will be taking the CSAP test from 8-10

Grades 5-6 will be taking the CSAP test from 10-12

Teachers may reschedule specials that are missed because of the test but should work that out with the individual specials teachers.

We may use the specials rooms and staff to help proctor students that need accommodations.